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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EU](#) [LO](#)  
SUBJECT: SLOVAK VIEWS BEFORE JAN 30 GAERC

REF: A. STATE 11254  
[1](#)B. BRATISLAVA 0073

Classified By: DCM Lawrence R. Silverman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Pol-Ec Chief discussed reftel points 1/24 with European Correspondent Lubomir Rehak. He was joined by Anna Petrasova, Third Secretary stationed at the Slovak mission to the EU, covering COTRA and COLAT/AMLAT, who wanted to see "how our transatlantic coordination works." Pol-Ec Chief encouraged her to reach out to USEU colleagues.

Iran  
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[1](#)2. (C) Rehak noted as positive that Russia does not want Iran to become a nuclear state. Nor does the EU want to create a world crisis, but rather wants to leave the door open for Iran to come back to the table. On the other hand, Iran used very successfully the tactic of provoking a confrontation and then coming back to talks fait accompli. The EU was considering possible commercial sanctions. Iran has to understand that the entire international community is against their nuclear activities, not just Europe. EU believes this problem can be solved through negotiations, but requires full cooperation within the IAEA and among international partners.

[1](#)3. (C) Rehak said that Slovakia's Ambassador in Tehran had been recalled for non-performance. While Slovakia tries to identify a replacement (no one qualified for the job seems to want it), the MFA's anti-terrorism coordinator Valer Franko will serve as Charge d'Affaires.

Iraq  
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[1](#)4. (C) Rehak said Slovakia agreed with the U.S. points; the council conclusions would urge the swift formation of a new, inclusive government, a review of the constitution to form a broad consensus on the future, and call on the international community to provide support for the new GOI. Rehak also mentioned the EU rule of law mission.

Middle East  
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[1](#)5. (C) Slovakia had two long-term observers and two short-term observers in the EU mission. Rehak noted the council conclusions would emphasize renunciation of violence and recognition of Israel. On January 27, Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan made public statements that if Hamas continued the policies it has exercised to date, it would be impossible to imagine Slovak cooperation with such a government. In its official statement, the MFA called on Hamas to renounce violence and participate in the peace process with Israel (reftel B).

Belarus

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¶16. (C) In addition to the regular messages on free and fair elections, Rehak commented on possible post-election steps. The MFA Director for Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, Stefan Rozkopal, further elaborated on these ideas with DCM on 1/26.

The Slovaks want to start working now on a message and a plan for "the day after." As soon as the OSCE issues its preliminary report, there should be a strong US-EU statement ready. It must be tough, but should not close the door for better relations between Belarus and the West if the government respects certain norms. Possible steps include extending travel restrictions to deputy ministers as well as ministers, and to extended family of high officials. Rehak noted Lukashenko did not have financial accounts in Western Europe, so asset freezes would be meaningless. As Rehak said of Lukashenko, "We must be practical. He will run. He will win. Brainwashing functions very well in Belarus." As an example, he expressed reservations about the Polish/Lithuanian initiative to meet with opposition leader Milinkevich before the Jan. 30 GAERC, saying it could be counterproductive. Effective state propaganda will disseminate the message that he is defaming the state. Finally, regarding the delays in obtaining visas for Fried and Cooper, Rehak joked, "They should send a Slovak--we don't need visas."

#### Montenegro

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¶17. (C) Rehak opined that Miroslav Lajcak was a great choice for mediating the Montenegro referendum issues. It is crucial that the opposition agree to participate, and if all sides are willing to give just a little, we're not far from a consensus position. The conditions of the referendum cannot prejudice the outcome; Lajcak's goal is to create a situation where everyone must fight for votes. He hoped the U.S. would press the opposition to take part in dialogue. Rehak described Lajcak's interactions with the Serb National Party, which initially told him it would not participate under any conditions. Therefore, on Lajcak's second visit to the region, he didn't even meet with them since their position was so clear. This sent a strong signal and was, in Rehak's view, an excellent tactic to send the message that non-participation meant no chance to influence the outcome.

¶18. (C) Again, Slovakia is concerned about "the day after." Belgrade politicians have no idea what they will do, given either result. They must start planning now to either form a state union that truly functions, or make a "Velvet Divorce." If the latter were to happen, they could use the former Czechoslovakia as an example.

#### Kosovo

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¶19. (C) In response to which incentives are necessary to keep Belgrade and Pristina engaged, Rehak exclaimed, "Good question!" The EU doesn't know what to offer Belgrade. Holding out the possibility of EU membership is not attractive to Serbia, nor is it appropriate (or believable) in this EU "period of reflection." The stabilization agreement could serve as a carrot. After status talks, said Rehak, the idea of a "European Protectorate" would be comfortable for Kosovo, but it is not an acceptable option for Slovakia.

¶10. (C) Rehak said Lajcak had truly appreciated meeting with the U.S. Consul General in Podgorica; unfortunately he did not have favorable things to say about the Russian representative there. Russians have been buying a lot of property in Montenegro and steadily increasing their economic interests, but the Russian consul was "lacking" as a diplomatic representative.

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